

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A timer device for a container holding a beverage, said timer device comprising:

a base member for coupling to the container;

a housing member adapted for coupling to said base member; and

a controller contained in said housing member, and including a timer component for measuring an elapsed time for the beverage, wherein said timer component includes an input for receiving a start signal; and

said controller including a power supply input.

2. The timer device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said start signal comprises a signal generated by a reset switch.

3. The timer device as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein said start signal comprises a command signal received from another device.

4. The timer device as claimed in claim 3, wherein said command signal is transmitted via a wireless communication link.

5. The timer device as claimed in claim 3, further including a display component, said display component being coupled to an output on said controller, and said controller including a component for activating said display component to display the elapsed time for the beverage.

6. The timer device as claimed in claim 5, further including an audio device, said audio device being coupled to an output on said controller, and said controller including a component for activating said audio device to provide an audible indication of a freshness state for the beverage.

7. The timer device as claimed in claim 6, further including a plurality of indicator devices, each of said indicator devices being coupled to an output on said controller, and said controller including a component for activating said indicator devices to provide a visible indicator of a freshness state for the beverage.

8. The timer device as claimed in claim 7, wherein said controller includes a component for activating said indicator devices to provide a visible indication of stages in a brew cycle for the beverage.

9. The timer device as claimed in claim 5, further including a pour switch, said pour switch being coupled to an input on said controller, and said pour switch generating an output signal when the container is tilted to pour the beverage, and said controller including a component for inputting the output signal from said pour switch.

10. The timer device as claimed in claim 5, further including a power supply indicator coupled to an output on said controller, said controller including a component for activating said power supply indicator to indicate a low power supply level.

11. The timer device as claimed in claim 1, further including a communication interface, said communication interface being coupled to said controller and being responsive to signals from said controller for receiving and transmitting data to another device.

12. A system for monitoring a brewed beverage dispensed from a container, said system comprising:

a timer device including,

a housing for coupling to the container;

a controller contained in said housing, and including a timer component

for measuring an elapsed time for the beverage, wherein said timer component includes an input for receiving a start signal;
a communication interface coupled to said controller, and said controller including a component for processing command signals received via said communication interface; and

a controller module including,

a controller device having an input port coupled to a fill switch, said fill switch outputting a signal, said controller device having a component responsive to said fill switch signal for generating said start signal for said timer device;

a communication interface coupled to said controller device, and said controller device including a component for transmitting said start signal to said timer device.

13. The system as claimed in claim 12, wherein said controller includes a component for transmitting a signal for said elapsed time via said communication interface.

14. The system as claimed in claim 12, wherein said timer device includes a pour switch, said pour switch being coupled to an input on said controller, and said pour switch generating an output signal when the container is tilted to pour the beverage, and said controller including a component for inputting the output signal from said pour switch and generating a pour signal for transmission via said communication signal.

15. The system as claimed in 14, further including a data processing unit having a communication interface, said communication interface executing a communication protocol compatible with said communication interface for said timer device or said controller module for receiving and transmitting signals, and said data processing unit including a component for processing said elapsed time signal and said pour signal.

16. The system as claimed in claim 15, wherein said data processing unit includes a component for generating command signals for transmission to said timer device or to said controller module.

17. The system as claimed in claim 12, wherein said controller module includes a display component, said display component being coupled to an output on said controller device, and said controller device including a component for activating said display component to display the elapsed time for the beverage.

18. The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein said controller module includes an audio device, said audio device being coupled to an output on said controller device, and said controller device including a component for activating said audio device to provide an audible indication of a freshness state for the beverage.

19. A device for monitoring a beverage in a container, said device comprising:
a base member for coupling to the container;
a housing member adapted for coupling to said base member;
a circuit contained in said housing member, and including a timer component for determining a freshness state for the beverage, wherein said timer component includes an input responsive to a start signal; and
said circuit including a power supply input.

20. The device as claimed in claim 19, wherein said circuit includes a display component, and a component for activating said display component to display the freshness state for the beverage.

21. The device as claimed in claim 20, wherein said circuit includes an audio device, and a component for activating said audio device to provide an audible indication of the freshness state for the beverage.

22. The device as claimed in claim 21, wherein said display component comprises a plurality of indicator devices, and said circuit includes a component for activating said indicator devices to provide a visible indicator of the freshness state for the beverage.

23. The device as claimed in claim 22, further including a faceplate for sound housing member, said faceplate having openings in communication with said indicator devices, and said faceplate including markings associated with said indicator devices and said markings providing information related to the freshness state.

24. The device as claimed in claim 23, wherein said faceplate includes advertising indicia.